

Message For World Press Freedom Day

Written by Robert ID1317
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This year, we commemorate the fifteenth World Press Freedom Day whose theme is “Media and good governance”. The annual commemoration of the World Press Freedom Day is an important occasion for media professionals who often pay a heavy price while exercising their duty

In 2004 only, 53 journalists were killed; 1,146 were mistreated; and more than 600 news organizations were censured across the world.

But today’s observance is also a unique opportunity to remind the international community that freedom of the press and freedom of expression are fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and supported by the United Nations Charter.

The professionals of a free and pluralistic media are not only messengers carrying good and bad news, but they also participate in the spreading of common values which enliven society.

The theme of this year underlines the importance of the responsibility of journalists. Indeed, they have an important role to play in promoting good governance as an essential element for maintaining peace and collective security and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in particular, those concerning the fight against poverty.

For journalists to carry out their mission with responsibility and professionalism, United Nations Member States must promote freedom of the press worldwide, including in areas of conflict.

In an increasingly interdependent world, the upcoming World Summit on the Information Society, scheduled to be held in Tunis in November 2005, will provide the international community with the opportunity to renew its commitment to a freer and more responsible press.

*The Above is the message by Jean Ping (Gabon), President of the General Assembly, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, 3 May 2005

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